

The University of Chicago

THE VALIDITY OF THEISM AS
A CORRECTIVE OF SUBJECTIVISM
IN RELIGION

A PART OF A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED
TO THE FACULTY OF THE DIVINITY SCHOOL
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR
OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY
AND ETHICS
1933

By
DOBBS FREDERICK EHLMAN

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INTRODUCTION

It is obvious that there are certain fundamentalists and modernists who agree heartily in a common dissatisfaction with "the whole subjectivizing tendency in religion that is so popular at the present time."¹ They have revolted against inferring a theology from "our inner consciousness." The inadequacy of any man-centered, fitfully subjectivistic religion is clearly apparent to each. They seek an object of religious devotion and trust, whose operative significance is akin to the objectively independent sovereign God of traditional Christianity, before whom man may unaffectedly achieve a surrender and humility which is one genuine secret of composed strength.

Our age is not the first to be perplexed by this "subjectivizing tendency." Phantasy, illusion, and subjectivism of all kinds were unavoidable dangers for the early Christians in their highly emotional experience of the spiritual rebirth. The "enthusiasm" which the Spirit produced often led to genuine hysteria on the part of the worshippers with a stifling result upon the meaning of the idea of God. The new group of saints soon regarded itself as the corporate bearer, instrumentality, and abode of the Holy Spirit, and Harnack asks who can think that this celestial Spirit was not often confused with lesser spirits.² If the Holy Spirit had remained the sole source of religious authority, the early church would have had no protection from spiritual chaos. Spirit has no communal reference. Its indeterminate nature eludes the unifying impact of a common social experience. But in the earliest Christian period, the spiritual energies released were not for long left entirely to the purely inward influence of thought as elicited by Spirit, but other revelatory authorities were appropriated by the group, namely, Lord, apostles, prophets, and sacred literature.³ These sources of revelation helped establish "the sociological point of reference" upon a firmer basis.

¹J. F. Newton (editor), My Idea of God (Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1926). See chap. iii by Professor Machen, p. 40.

²A. Harnack, Die Entstehung der christlichen Theologie und des kirchlichen Dogmas (Gotha: Leopold Klotz Verlag, 1927), p. 22.

³Ibid., pp. 20, 21, 22.

Troeltsch argues that it was out of this common need for a more objective point of view that the episcopate arose. The sociological situation required it. Accordingly, the episcopate and the sacramental system became objective concrete channels through which miraculous powers were extended. The Exalted Christ and the Spirit could retain religious significance only in some such tangible manifestation as was offered by the priesthood.⁴ Here, again, Troeltsch's argument is exceptionally pertinent wherein he points out that the redeeming power of the new knowledge of God had to be set forth in objective processes adequate to counteract "fitful, merely human subjectivity."⁵ The Holy Spirit can scarcely be a "faithful guide" when divorced from the impact of social sanctions and inhibitions.

The Christian prophet, who was not merely taught of God, but who was also highly charged in his inner life with deity itself, was not always a healthful influence, because the corollary was that his mind had no genuine place in nature in the sense that nature was reflected in his reactions to the world. The luster of his message resided in the fact that it miraculously transcended the causal determination of antecedent conditions in pervasive environmental tensions. In the light of that constellation of thought necessary for an adequate objectivity in modern theistic philosophy, we believe that the environment of the minded organism is reflected very definitely in its reactions to its world, however much it may determine its own environment.

But the study here presented does not center in the materials of any particular period in the past. Rather, the attempt has been to clarify what is meant by subjectivism in religion today, and to determine wherein the validity of theism resides, if it is to correct what is pernicious in such subjectivism. The method employed has been to study four types of subjectivism, namely: (a) the introspective methodology in pre-scientific religious psychology; (b) faculty psychology in a modern theology; (c) the philosophy of moral optimism; (d) and the humanistic notion of supreme value as harmony. This furnished typical data for a statement of the problem in terms of summary propositions. Following this, a survey study was made of the following definite

⁴E. Troeltsch, The Social Teaching of the Christian Church (New York: Macmillan Co., 1931), pp. 89 ff.

⁵Ibid., p. 95. Also see Willoughby, Pagan Regeneration (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1929), chaps. iii, iv, and vi. Here, note the religious importance of the sociological fact of ceremonial and religious drama in the Greek mysteries.

trends in current thought which we believe to be worthwhile correctives of such sources of subjectivism: (a) objective methodology in modern psychology; (b) value in terms of contemporary pragmatism; (c) the physical theory of nature; (d) the metaphysics of rationalistic scientific method; (e) and the theoretical basis of the organism-environment pattern in theology. Finally, the attempt was made in the last section to establish the validity of theism as a needful corrective of unwarranted subjectivism in religion.

In so far as originality is to be claimed in this thesis, it must be done not in terms of novelty in method or findings but rather in the simple attempt to get at the theoretical difficulties involved in religious living, and to determine to what extent, and in what respect, pleasing illusions and illusory plausibilities can be averted with their pernicious effects, as they bear on our views of salvation, the human self, and the nature of God. It is believed that no greater service can be rendered today in the philosophy of religion, than that of clarifying concepts used in religious living in the light of the new place that man is seen to have in nature, giving special attention to tracing the religious and anti-religious implications in current epistemology and value theory.



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SECTION III

THE VALIDITY OF THEISM AS A CORRECTIVE OF SUBJECTIVISM IN RELIGION

CHAPTER XI

SOURCES OF SUBJECTIVISM IN RELIGION

In the first division of this thesis, an examination was made of (a) the introspective pre-scientific methodology of the religious psychology of Augustine, (b) the apologetic faculty psychology implicit in the theology of R. Otto, (c) the subjectivism in D. C. Macintosh's notion of moral optimism, and (d) D. Parker's humanistic ideal of a supreme harmony as highest value. This provided the concrete materials from which to draw an interpretation of some of the specific constituent factors which enter into the vague item called subjectivism in religion. While the above mentioned materials served as a basis for the statement of the problem, yet its true significance only became apparent after the second division of the study was completed. Here, an examination was made of (a) objective biological methodology in psychology, (b) value theory in terms of contemporary pragmatism, (c) the physical view of nature, (d) the metaphysics of rationalistic scientific method, (e) and the theoretical basis of the organism-environment pattern in theology. In light of our findings as already stated in the two divisions of our study mentioned above, an attempt will now be made to restate in a summarized form, what is here regarded as the most pertinent sources of current subjectivism in religion.

(1) a. First, we find the theory that the self is a substance or innate faculty miraculously implanted in man independent of the transmutation process caused by sociological influences. Here, the self or soul is a "given," and like the numinous faculty or the moral will, in its essential nature, it is not subject to the forces of change. This religious view of the self as a static substance is a notion having historical kinship to the philosophical view of mind as substance. It is what Professor Perry would call the "primitive and inveterate habit" of thinking substantially rather than analytically or relationally.¹ In this approach, the

¹R. B. Perry, General Theory of Value (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1926), p. 403. Also cf. C. W. Morris, Six Theories

heart of the religious and philosophical outlook is that nature is not self-explanatory. Man is not regarded as continuous with nature itself but rather is a little god existing outside nature. Such a naturalistic view as the strictly social genesis of the self would be a source of heresy because it would repudiate the view that meanings are wholly private. But meaning is more than "a property of ghostly psychic existence." Also mind is an emergent field whose significance belongs to objective things in relation to individuals. It emerges as "the functioning of significant symbols" in the social process. To regard mental elements as disembodied psychic stuff capable of physical causation is to invite all sorts of gross superstition. The pre-scientific dualistic view of the body as the prison house of the soul is meaningless in light of the biological sociological view of mind as function. The mind-body relation is such a fact in nature that nature may appear in experience.

b. A corollary of the substance theory of human nature is that salvation is a transformation made within the soul-substance independent of the world in which we live.² It is a matter of an other-worldly salvation of the personal soul, with no reference to the natural and social objects that modify goods actually experienced in the phenomenal world. It is a subjectivism based upon the denial that the mind determines and is determined by the environment. It denies that the environment of the organism is reflected in the reactions of the organism to the world. It is oblivious to the field of stimulation, which, through investigation, would direct man into adaptive pertinent behavior and a saving relationship with God. But the above subjectivism is neutralized by regarding morally redeemed consciousness as growing coterminous with some moral situation, and moral creativity as

of Mind (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1932), chap. i.

²In Chalcedonian Christology, which set the basis for traditional orthodoxy, we have a vivid dramatization of the notion of substance in the scheme of salvation. Here, it was declared that in Jesus Christ there were two clearly distinct natures or substances, the one human and the other divine, and in no way did they merge so as to affect each other. Thus, there were these two compartments or abodes in the being of the Son. Human salvation was a fact because the divine nature was potent to theize miraculously human nature which was in Christ as head of the human race. Also, immortality by a resurrection of the body was a fact because the human substance had been theized by the divine substance which came into contact with it in the incarnation of Jesus.

rising through the reconstruction of the situation while the self is in the process of being reconstructed. Creative moral power is found within the self only in so far as man has found a meaning in this world which answers to his new found insight. The individual and the larger environment are mutually determined.

An interpretation of moral consciousness must be found within the act as point of reference. To appeal to a moral order which wholly transcends the immediate situation, either temporally or metaphysically, is to deprive our spiritual life of the intellectual interest which is by right integral to it. The end of religious living is more than conformity to a given moral order, for the emergent novel nature of each present would abrogate the complete validity of any order inherent in a past. Then, too, the ideal of conformity to a transcendent other-worldly moral order would rob man of the lessons that come from frustrations, namely the opportunity to note wherein loss and suffering are suggestive of what is and what is not worthwhile. While loss may be transmuted into good, there was always a possible greater good if the loss had been justifiably averted.

(2) a. A second source of subjectivism in religion resides in the notion that intuition, independent of sense data and reason, is a source of new knowledge. In order to be certain as to the purity of the revelation, here we have an implicit denial of the naturalistic principle in modern genetic psychology whereby cognition is declared to have some sort of imaginal sensory content. Like the view of the human self as a static substance, it rests upon the uncritical notion that our intuitive forms are fixed forever and that our task is to inspect them. It is not acknowledged that any present state of consciousness has been intruded by the causal determination of a past. Here religion is regarded as an instinctive fact which is to be explored by intuitive insight.

Now, instead of having a religious instinct, man's original equipment is rather a matter of "prepotent reflexes," to use Floyd Allport's term, which are neutral in religious significance until a religious sentiment has been built upon them. For religion is a sentiment rather than an instinct. Religious ideas are but parts of the wider constellation of a sentiment, and they are emergent and novel due to the conditioning potency of each present. No supernatural interpretation of Hebrew prophecy can avail to discount the view that prophecy was socially conditioned. Fortunate insights in religion or in science can emerge only after an abundance of previous information. Also, let it be emphatically said that no imaginal content is "spiritual stuff." It depends for its existence upon conditions in the organism as they determine and are determined by the environment.

Knowledge may be had but it consists in verified prediction. Neither belief nor opinion may be identified with it. We get it only by the rigid tests of observation, analysis, inference, and experiment.³ What is less certain than knowledge is inadequate as a basis for a theistic metaphysics. Such a product would lead to uncritical subjectivism in religion which can be avoided only by due recognition of the philosophy of rationalistic scientific method. If by intuition we merely mean some sort of "unconscious incubation" from which hypotheses emerge as the result of prior sensory content, it may conceivably help promote the process of gaining knowledge as interpreted by rationalistic scientific method. But science as the self-corrective system already described rests its validity upon a composite ideal whose meaning is far more inclusive than intuition.

b. One corollary of intuition in religious history has been that the nature of God can be inferred from the content of certain conscious states which are predominate in religious experience rather than from the activity of God in the total human and non-human environment in which we live. This has been well demonstrated in the apologetic notion that theology can be made scientifically "empirical" by a study of the "divine" and the "human" elements in religious experience to the end of discovering "Christian S-R Bonds"; also, in the thesis that numinous states of consciousness convey knowledge of transcendent deity.

There is no form of subjectivism in religion more pernicious nor man-centered than that in which it is supposed that God's complete determinate nature can be found by a study of the indeterminate ambiguity called religious experience. Any concept which "swallows up" its own negative is of little value in precise thought; and religious experience is such a composite term, including hallucination, illusion, high-suggestibility, wishful-thinking, and belief-centered devotion rather than God-centered devotion, as well as any qualities of merit which might be mentioned. It is apt to be a private state of consciousness rather than a fact which has been modified and objectified by an inclusive system of group experiences. No private state of consciousness has any truth-validity without having been subjected to the rational test of the widest possible area of human experience. Experiences do not categorize themselves independent of the criteria of interpretation which it is the peculiar function of reason to produce. The criteria, commonly known as concepts, become germane to objective reality as we know it on account of

³H. N. Wieman, Religious Experience and Scientific Method (New York: Macmillan, 1926), pp. 21 ff.

having emerged out of a sharable effort to determine which categories are applicable to nature and which are not.

Disagreement is here expressed with R. Otto and D. C. Macintosh because each has constructed a theistic philosophy upon religious experience.⁴ Their method is predominantly apologetic and this is scarcely warranted since cult values are incommensurable. Psychological certainty was sought rather than logical certainty based on those invariant characteristics which pervade the very nature of things. Both systems of theology are totally lacking in an awareness of disruptive emergent events as they change the character of the world and similarly they are oblivious to the uncertainty which arises as a result of indeterminate contingent forces in existence. A moral optimism that is blind to the fact that there are losses and real losers in life is illusion. It is cowardice rather than piety to be afraid of a life that is fraught with the danger of genuine loss.

(3) a. A third source of subjectivism, which is characteristic of much religious humanism, resides in a kind of epistemological dualism wherein it is held that human knowledge is no more than a matter of a perceptual content in terms of which the affirmed object is interpreted. That is, we know in terms of the content of perceptions only. As a result of an exaggerated fear of supernaturalism, due regard is not given to the significance of the concept as opposed to the percept. In the non-apprehensional view of knowledge (as represented by Professor Parker and Professor Sellars) we have a positivistic nominalism in which all existential ontological validity would be denied to concepts as formulated by rationalistic scientific method. Reality means no more than that which is psychologically or sensuously vivid. It is held that man is confined to sense qualia and his immediate awareness of them on the one hand, without being able, on the other hand, to know the real properties of objects. Now, as Professor Lewis has pointed out, relativity requires an independent character in what is relative, and in conceptual interpretation we appropriate "the relational pattern in which the independent character of what is apprehended is exhibited in

⁴M. R. Cohen in Reason and Nature (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1931) declares, "To identify the substance of the world with the fact of our experience of some part of it is to set up an anthropocentric universe, compared to which the mediaeval one is sane and respectable. For the mediaeval one rebuked the silly and arrogant pretensions of humanity by setting against it the great glory of God." P. 453.

experience."⁵ Since to define the real does not require that we plumb the depths of the universe, it is permissible to say that in relational conceptual patterns bequeathed by rationalistic scientific method, we have something which is truly germane to objective reality. This epistemological emphasis, so needful in value theory to avert subjectivism, would be regarded as an artificial contention by the humanist with his non-apprehensional view of knowledge. While the humanist may be anxious to avoid completely any affinity with thaumaturgy, it is not warranted that he should espouse an epistemology which issues in gross subjectivism in value theory.

b. The subjectivistic anti-theistic character of a positivistic epistemology becomes apparent when it is made the substructure of a value theory. It bifurcates fact and value. Value is reduced to states of consciousness independent of the environmental relations that sustain, support, and promote them. It is a pattern of conscious qualities alleged to be supported by human psychic processes in the sense that non-human factors are wholly neutral in value significance. Value resides in the fulfillment of satisfied desire. Beyond this qualitative psychic state, there is no basis of reference by which to judge value. Values become qualitative rather than quantitative and with this the worthwhile item is independent of any such laws of measurement as might be necessary to estimate the relative worth of any particular item as constituent in a more inclusive system. Of course, this emphasis upon the qualitative aspect of value to the neglect of the quantitative is also characteristic of many theistic discussions. It is most typical of such mysticism wherein the determinate or definite character of things is denied because of interest in beliefs which cannot stand the test of reason. In accord with this qualitative interpretation of the object of worth, religious devotion becomes focalized on private states of consciousness rather than upon the external object which sustains and promotes them. It is the same psychological phenomenon as exists in the case of the youth, who, while he thinks he has dedicated himself to the good of the beloved, has only fallen in love with love.

(4) a. The fourth source of subjectivism in religion resides in the notion that God is non-physical and transcendent with respect to that which is existential in the space-time order, thus depriving man of any determinate basis of reference by which to correct his compensatory, eschatological rationalizations

⁵C. I. Lewis, Mind and the World-Order (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1929), p. 73.

concerning the nature of God. Thus, by denying to God's nature a determinate and physical status, in the sense that we believe it to be no more than disembodied spirit, the theologian forfeits the chief factor in terms of which it is possible for man to transform his subjectivistic needs into a conformity with God's objective nature. The result is that theology is romanticized.

The humanist is quite correct in his declaration that the God-idea is a "rationalization of an inherited concept which has lost its historical significance," if God be no more than pure, ineffable, indeterminate, other-worldly spirit. One reason for our indebtedness to Spinoza was that he conceived God to be an observable realm of reality.⁶ Furthermore, in historical theology we see that the creative theologians thought of God in terms of social mind-sets which were existent in a present. Highest value theistically categorized in terms of the mind-sets born of social experience in feudal society was not a "rationalization" to Anselm. Professor Mead's theory that the present with its antecedent conditions is the locus of reality is intriguingly true. At least, one of the most certain ways to avoid illusion in religion is to think of God in terms of the most productive thought patterns which are operative in the particular present in which we live, for there is no past as known except that which is created by our present. That is to say, each present creates its own past in the sense that, since each present is a novel emergent, by taking it as point of reference to interpret the past, we have a new reference system in which reality resides. We know the past only as revised, and our revision necessarily conditions it as known. Our perceptual as well as our conceptual processes give us no copy of the past past. Our past is but a revision of the actual former event. Objectivity and sociality (using the term "sociality" as Mead uses it) are facilitated by an awareness of the fact that reality exists in a present as temporal focus of a reference system. Due to the passage of time no past has been confined to any one reference system.⁷ Each age has had its own theological pattern. Thus, each age has a revocable past, but the irrevocable past eludes it. To affiliate our religion with the latter is illusory subjectivism. To relegate God to a realm of disembodied spirit or to an irrevocable past which is not our revocable past, conceived in terms of a relational system in which

⁶M. R. Cohen, "The Intellectual Love of God," Menorah Journal, XI, 332 ff.

⁷G. H. Mead, The Philosophy of The Present. Edited by A. Murphy (Chicago: Open Court Publishing Co., 1932).

the present is the point of reference, is fantasy. As an object of devotion, God becomes meaningless; or to be more exact, let us say, fictitious.

b. The non-theistic emphasis of the humanist, due to an inordinate fear of supernaturalism, denies any genuine objective norm in value theory which might be utilized as a standard by which to correct the demands of chaotic desire. The result is that the status quo is too often sanctified. Furthermore, the humanistic interpretation of evil as the conflict of one desire with another which has been appeased, is lacking in an adequate recognition of the objective fact of disrupting contingency in nature as it operates to frustrate man in his attempt to promote the shared quest for the good life.

When God is non-existential and non-physical, there is no basis of reference from which to appraise critically the validity of the typical apologetic assertion that God will conserve the highest values of persons of good will "in spite of anything the forces of nature can do."⁸ By a subtle juggling of words under the guise of logic, Professor Macintosh would tell us that for the moral optimist, there can be no loss. If the view that all values of the moral optimist will ultimately be conserved, were not so other-worldly and subjectivistic, it would be somewhat pertinent and suggestive to reflect upon the fact that the Roman Empire fell shortly after Christianity became the state religion. To deny the fact of loss, even in the life of a moral optimist, is pernicious illusion. It is the corollary of an other-worldly subjectivistic view of salvation. It can set no other than a fictitious goal for individual lives. Spiritual living demands that loss be realistically accepted as loss. Of course it may be transmuted into a source of value, for God transmutes what has been lost into a living fact within his own nature.

⁸D. C. Macintosh, The Reasonableness of Christianity (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1925), p. 84.

CHAPTER XII

THE NATURE OF THE SPIRITUAL LIFE

First, let it be noted that there has been a very valid and worthful form of "inwardness" displayed in the history of religion. In fact, it has been so characteristic and potent that one great thinker defines religion wholly in terms of that "inwardness." While admitting that there is no dualism between society and man, Professor Whitehead declares religion to be "the art and theory of the internal life of man, so far as it depends on man himself and on what is permanent in the nature of things."¹ If man is never solitary, he is said never to be religious, for religion is what he does with his solitariness. It is only after the high stage of rationality has been reached in religious living that solitariness can emerge and truly constitute the heart of religion. Furthermore, it has been from scenes of solitariness that the great and haunting religious conceptions have arisen. "Religion is the force of belief cleansing the inward parts."² This stress upon the importance of inwardness in religion as made by Professor Whitehead has been criticized by certain students of religion; nevertheless, it is a permissible interpretation in light of Professor Mead's view of the self as composite, consisting of a "me" and an "I"; the "me" being the organized attitude of others taken over into the self and the "I" being the response of the biological individual to these attitudes, with individuality traced to the latter.

There is a profound validity in evangelical Christianity which we interpret to mean "the personal discovery that religion is a creative power in the innermost citadel of the heart."³ This involves a personal honesty in which man is conscious of being alone with himself. He feels that a new self has emerged within him, and with this religion becomes a precious personal possession. While it may be an artificiality to the unimaginative observer who tries to take his role and fails, to the one who possesses the new

¹A. N. Whitehead, Religion in the Making (New York: Macmillan Co., 1926), p. 16.

²Ibid., p. 15.

³G. B. Smith, Current Christian Thinking (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1928), p. 202.

loyalty, it has sanctified human existence with a new order of possible meanings, and this is the abode of highest value. In no way does it consist in the exaltation of an ideal of formal authority.

Jesus said, "The pure in heart shall see God." By way of stressing a similar necessity of cultivating right mental attitudes, Wang Yang Ming, the one outstanding Chinese idealist, said, "If the roots have not been cultivated, how can there be branches and leaves."⁴ Neither of these statements is so representative of contemplative India as of the practical mind of the West, wherein intuition is usually associated with practical action. They are quite in accord with the view that the end of religion is the emergence of individual worth of character. This inwardness is congenial to and necessary for "worshipful problem solving" wherein reflection and self-analysis are of great importance.⁵ Or, as Professor Hocking has so clearly pointed out in a chapter on "The Principle of Alternation," continuous overt ambition and effort without the necessary alternative inner attitude of worshipful effortless attention is sure to defeat itself.⁶

Furthermore, the nature of aesthetic experience is such that we must stop our overt activity in order "to enjoy the community of life." Aesthetic experience is that which attaches to finalities.⁷ Man must have a chance for aesthetic delight in the midst of labor. God is found in the aesthetic order of the universe because its richness and fullness exceeds that of any conceptual order; and to be profoundly aesthetic is to be religious.⁸ Here, it is important to recall that in pragmatic value theory, action is not the goal of thought so much as a constituent in the process which would have value as a consummatory object; and this does not invalidate the thesis that each good is instrumental as well as consummatory. In each overt attempt to promote an aesthetic order of value not yet actual, there is a prior mystical expression which can in no way be banned as futile subjectivism.⁹ It is the

⁴F. G. Henke, *The Philosophy of Wang Yang Ming* (Chicago: Open Court Publishing Co., 1916), p. 124.

⁵H. N. Wieman, *The Issues of Life* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1930), pp. 18 ff.

⁶W. E. Hocking, *The Meaning of God in Human Experience* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1912), chap. xxviii.

⁷G. H. Mead, "The Nature of Aesthetic Experience," *Int. Journal of Ethics*, XXXVI, 382 ff.

⁸H. N. Wieman, *Wrestle of Religion with Truth* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1927), pp. 189 ff.

⁹Note Professor Wieman's idea of mysticism in "Theocentric

private state of consciousness which in part helps make individuality a fact.

A second issue to be discussed in connection with the nature of the spiritual life is the role played by definition. The problem is concerned with the possibility of bare indeterminate religious experience existing without the need of categorization by the process of definition. In the older dualistic epistemologies, it was possible for a meaningful awareness to exist independent of definition by categorization. It was a kind of copy theory in which a likeness of the external object was photographically superimposed upon the perceptual mechanism. But in the biological-sociological view of man the fact of reason is integral to the activity of the organism adjusting itself to an environment, often hostile, in terms of intelligence. Prediction and control require definition. For those whose religious living has reached the level of rationalism, this is a welcome fact but for those whose religious living resides in either the area of ritual, emotion, or belief, it is heresy.

Experience does not categorize itself and hence religious experience without definition is an impossibility. It may be claimed that mana to the savage was a vague and undefined potency giving subjective quality to an inner experience. This is true and it is a proof that modern man should shape up the distinction between what is subjective and objective.¹⁰ Not that a dualism exists between the two but that the intimate connection might be clearly seen in all its complexity. Sentimentalism can be averted only by clarity of definition in respect to the object of a sentiment. This is essentially true in case of the religious sentiment; for "the object of esthetic judgment must always transcend the merely given," for the given is always ineffable.¹¹ In short, definition in religious experience is an unavoidable necessity. Otherwise, God can mean no more than an "oblong blur."

Furthermore, the conceptual element in religious living as given in definition is indispensable because all communication depends upon it. Professor Lewis says "conceptual meaning is sharable; our imagery essentially not."¹² So far as the feeling

Religion" in Religion in Life, I, 102 ff. He says, "By mysticism we mean to react with love or some other strong emotion toward what exceeds the scope of our understanding, and with full recognition that our patterns of thought fall far short of its full reality." P. 106.

¹⁰See the discussion of E. E. Aubrey, "Definition in Religious Experience," Journal of Philosophy, Vol. XXVII, 1930.

¹¹Lewis, op. cit., p. 403.

¹²Ibid., p. 81.

side of experience is concerned, there can be no verification of community between minds. The subjectivistic disparagement of clear definition in spiritual living is pernicious because it resolves itself into an unhealthy individualism. What is essential to communication is never the qualities of immediate experience so much as that pattern of stable relations in experience which is implicitly predicated when it is taken as the characteristic of an objective property. Objectivity, as well as communication, has a unique dependence upon that conceptual order of relations which constitutes the intelligibility necessary for knowledge. Reality is the given, categorically interpreted, rather than the given as such. Thus the concept has a common validity in promoting communication and that definite structure of meanings which are germane to objective reality. Community of mind, without which the spiritual life is meaningless,¹³ requires a pattern of inter-related connotations which have been projected by, and which are necessary for, cooperative purposive behavior.

Also, in the light of the view of the self as having a social genesis in that self-hood emerges with the ability to call out in one's mind the same response as that called out in the other, we see the functioning of significant symbols, which, in contrast to pure gestures, are characterized by a richly conceptual content.¹⁴ Thinking becomes a conversation between the self and "the generalized other." Here, experience has been conceptualized in terms of significant symbols to a degree that we do not find in the gesture which is the highest level of communication in animal life. The truly human is a matter of significant symbols which in turn is the condition of genuine communication. Any self goes beyond subjectivity when it becomes aware of the fact that its thought relations are suggestive of frames of reference which transcend those of itself. Also, sociality resides in the fact that in a case of emergent novelty, the object necessarily has

¹³In connection with the problem of the spiritual life, consider the following statements by R. Niebuhr in "The Ethics of Jesus and the Social Problem," Religion in Life, I, 198, 200. "He (Jesus) spoke of the kingdom and not of salvation and the kingdom meant an ideal social relationship, even though he might emphasize that it proceeded from internal spiritual forces." Also, "We are demanded to forgive those who have wronged us, not because a forgiving spirit will prove redemptive in the lives of the fallen but because God forgives our sins."

¹⁴G. H. Mead, "A Behavioristic Account of the Significant Symbol," Journal of Philosophy, XIX, 157 ff.

its status both in the old system and in the emergent new. In mind, sociality attains its highest level. This is a revelation of the principle of relativity whereby we find that in a unique way the object must be "contemporaneously in different systems to be what it is in either."¹⁵ To locate an object in one system is to locate it in others as well, according to the principle of relativity. Through the functioning of significant symbols, the self appropriates the high degree of sociality whereby it is able to see its status as being contemporaneously in several systems in order to be what it is in either. It is the function of definition to facilitate this capacity.

In short, the intricate fact of being a person resolves itself into significant symbols, or concepts. These two technicalities merely suggest that communication is a matter of definition as we have it in conceptual interpretations in terms of relational structures; and if spiritual life is to have meaning in the realm of existence it cannot deny the important role of definition whereby these relational patterns are given form. The nature of the spiritual life must in some way be constitutive of a community of knowledge, and this is possible precisely because of the indispensable conceptual element. Religious experience soon transcends any body of private knowledge.

It is the role of definition in religious living, not only to promote a community of knowledge, but also to explore the wider area of possible value. It is the genius of the concept to go beyond immediate perception by involving much which is not given at the moment in sensory content. Objectivity, as validated by the concept, implies this "beyond." Concepts bring to clear consciousness and express coherently the potentially possible values resident in specific moral situations. Pure experience, without reason, does not tell us what is good or bad, nor does it determine what is valid or invalid. Experience, devoid of logic, is confusion even if it be religious. Divorced from the power of reflection, it can teach little; and as to possible experience, that is precisely a matter of intellectual considerations. So long as the experience of pleasing illusion is a possibility, the discriminating work of reason is of primary importance. It, alone, can introduce order and consistency into man's religious vision by revealing to him the underlying order in nature which determines the wider realm of possible value. "Without rational reflection the field of unfamiliar possibilities is closed."¹⁶ No substitute for reason, be it authority, pure experience, intuition, or

¹⁵G. H. Mead, The Philosophy of The Present, p. 63.

¹⁶M. R. Cohen, Reason and Nature, p. 73.

creative imagination, can fruitfully direct us into the realm of emergent events. Reason is the matrix from which arises the greatest number of possible anticipations of nature, whereby sensory experience, the polar opposite of reason, achieves its pertinence and variety.

But we are not saying that definition in terms of rationalistic scientific method operates in religious living in such a way as to give new truth adequate for every situation. The discovery of new orders of value and worthwhile insights necessarily involves "a leap into the dark." Observation on the basis of the widest possible area of human experience is also necessary. Yet careful reflective attention paid to the principles involved in the advancement of knowledge concerning the object of religious devotion are not without value. They serve to direct investigation upon the field of stimulation in which human life exists with the natural consequence of promoting a type of behavior which incurs a proper relationship with the source of religious security and strength.¹⁷

Furthermore, it should be acknowledged that religious living is not research in philosophy. The two are distinct. In religious living, practical action, the deed, a striving for the highest possibilities of value, comes first. "We cannot find God by concepts alone."¹⁸ First the act and then the conceptual interpretation and by keeping the two close together, God, as a concept, becomes potently real. By keeping reason and observation closely united, subjectivism is averted. When we seek God independent of observation in terms of what "ought to be," there is no check on illusory plausibilities in thought, and this is what is pernicious in subjectivism in religion. By observation and definition Professor Wieman concludes that "God is what sustains,

¹⁷E. E. Aubrey, Religion and the Next Generation (New York: Harper and Bros., 1931), chap. v. Note Professor Aubrey's argument that we find the meaning of God in terms of the following series of observations, namely:

- (a) "What do I consider of supreme worth in my experience?"
- (b) "What is there in it that makes it worth while?"
- (c) "Is this value found in the universe as a whole?"
- (d) "What sort of society would allow the fullest realization of this value?"
- (e) "What would such an ideal program demand of my personal conduct?"

¹⁸Wieman, Macintosh, Otto, Is There a God? (Chicago: Clark and Co., 1932), p. 128. (By Dr. Wieman.)

promotes, and constitutes the highest possibilities of value."¹⁹ Man only finds God by trying to promote these highest possibilities.

The truly objective property of God only becomes apparent in the conceptual interpretation of what is immediately presented in experience. The 'given' conceptually interpreted becomes 'the real object.' If the immediately given in religious living is not categorized by conceptual definition, we can have no knowledge of God. While there is an apprehension of the immediate, it is not knowledge. There is no knowledge without concepts which are always subject to the tests of observation. The concept assists in avoiding a confusion of quale and objective property. Perceptual content cannot represent a coincidence of mind and object. Qualia are subjective and ineffable. We communicate not in terms of the qualia but in terms of the pattern of stable relations in experience which are germane to objective properties. Immediate qualia apart from some relational context as determined by conceptual interpretation are inarticulate and subjective. Says Professor Lewis, "What constitutes the existence of objective property and the applicability of a concept is not a given quale alone, but an ordered relation of different qualia, relative to different conditions of behavior."²⁰ In short, God, as a structure or concept of existence and possibility, has validity in correcting many ramifications of uncritical subjectivism in religious living. In the light of the self-corrective system of rationalistic scientific method, it is the only valid procedure.

In the third place, the nature of spiritual living suggests the necessary awareness of the emergent character of our world. Ours is a world of emergent events. No Parmenidean reality exists. Spiritual living cannot be accounted for by ascribing it to a willingness to conform to a rational moral order or purpose external to a changing situation with the moral act as point of reference. Creative moral living is a fact resident in the interaction between man's moral situation and his ethical and spiritual consciousness. It emerges only in a process which reconstructs the situation while it is being reconstructed itself. The effect of every adaptation is a new environment which in turn is altered by being the object of new responses. Accordingly, Professor Mead has said, "Moral advance consists not in adapting individual natures to the fixed realities of a moral universe, but in constantly reconstructing and re-creating the world as the

¹⁹Ibid., p. 122. (By Dr. Wieman.)

²⁰C. I. Lewis, Mind and the World-Order, p. 130.

individual evolves."²¹ The interpretation of moral consciousness, then, must be sought within the act. The creativity of moral action cannot be stated in terms of a conformity to a given order except in apologetic and speculative terminology. If moral consciousness resides in the possibility of reacting to a field of stimulation, then that field can be investigated and action can be kept pertinent; and moral defect can be investigated and traced to the concrete source from which it sprang. An objective external moral order as a basis for ethical activity is a subtle source of subjectivism if it obscures the importance of critically investigating the field of stimulation (interpreting that to include intra-organic tissue needs and energy changes) wherein resides an explanation of the sources of human behavior. Moral consciousness necessitates a conceptual order if it is to have meaning and find direction, but that order becomes real and actual only by having the moral situation as point of reference. It is the moral act critically categorized in terms of relational patterns.

The emergent character of our world means that history as known is but representative of a revocable past--the irrevocable past remaining forever independent of human apprehension, although it may have entered causally into emergent events. The revocable past which is a reconstruction of the past past is not coincident with that past which forever eludes reproduction. The present, from the standpoint of that which is emergently novel in its nature, presents us the revocable past which is but a transient construct, only to be replaced by the next emergent present. This is not complete scepticism in respect to the past but it is a valuable caution when it comes to setting up items from the stream of history as ethical norms. For, situations which are alleged to have had existence can never be reproduced in any literal sense of the term. All we can know is an interpretation of the past in terms of the ideology of our vivid present which can in no precise way be said to coincide with that which has already transpired. Thus we cannot adopt any spiritual ideal bequeathed by the past in an uncritical way.

A fact of primary importance in religious living is the fact that new adjustments must be made in the event of emergent novelties. They must enter into a unique relationship with the old. There must be some understanding of the conditions out of which the emergent arose, and consequently some knowledge of the conditions under which it shall exist since a different world has appeared through its emergence. No adjustment to the novel event

²¹G. H. Mead, "The Philosophical Basis of Ethics," Int. Journal of Ethics, XVIII, 319.

can be made prior to its emergence because no knowledge of existent or past conditioning forces is adequate to predict its complete emergent character. Repugnant emergent events must be accepted as such. In religious subjectivism they have too often been denied true meaning as a part of nature. Accordingly Professor Mead has critically said, "The repugnant fact, is without doubt, an emergent; it has, however, been customary to place its essential novelty in a mental experience and to deny it to the world that the mind is experiencing."²² Independent reality at any moment carries with it no implication of finality.²³

The age old quest for certainty has made "confidence in the cosmos" a very high spiritual ideal. Hostile physical phenomena have been explained as due to providence or some other form of disembodied spirit. The goal has been to make the future certain, to take the risk out of adventure, and to deny that "spiritual" desires may meet frustration. Psychological certainty was made a peculiar possession of the man of faith. Now, we are not denying that there may be degrees of certainty, but it must be built upon the measure of finality which arises from competent formulation of independent reality itself and also from the degree of success attained in the anticipation of future events.²⁴ The tough-mindedness advocated by Wm. James was certainly not a moral optimism as revealed in his statement,

"I am willing to think that the prodigal-son attitude . . . is not the right and final attitude towards the whole of life. I am willing that there should be real losses and real losers, and not total preservation of all that is."²⁵

According to the Calvinistic ideal of being willing to be damned for the glory of God, it is necessary to be willing to be tough-minded and accept risk as fraught with danger and possible loss. This is not moral optimism but it is high religion built upon an awareness of evil, clearly seen and gallantly opposed. Subjectivism in spiritual living is averted only by studying the emergent field of stimulation which is highly charged with the polar fact of friendly and hostile cosmic forces rather than to take cowardly refuge in the domain of introspective plausibilities.²⁶

²²G. H. Mead, The Philosophy of the Present, p. 99.

²³Ibid., p. 106.

²⁴Ibid., p. 105.

²⁵W. James, Pragmatism, A New Name for Some Old Ways of Thinking.

²⁶W. Montague, The Ways of Knowing (New York: Macmillan Co., 1925), p. 58. Here it is pertinently pointed out that

To sum up, the purpose of this section has been first to acknowledge the importance of that "inwardness" in all serious living whereby, through reflective worshipful self-analysis, a more adequate religious adjustment is promoted. This is not an interpretation of the world in terms of man's needs, nor is it a sanction for any metaphysics based upon a desire for complete security in a changing often hostile world. It is an attempt to recognize the well known fact that individual initiative may so transform desire as to serve to promote a purity of heart without which moral creativity would be an artificiality. Deliberate thought may not suffice to add a cubit to man's physical stature, but it does serve to point the way to a more adequate orientation of life towards less fictitious goals. There is a goal available whose function it is "to be one to adore supremely, to serve and fail and die for; to hang on the cross for; to change all the cold mean misery of life into the tenderness of tears; to give to all man's wretchedness the sanctity of a great devotion."²⁷ A private mystical sense of the unexplored possibilities of human existence resident in a high devotion to that goal is quite apt to sweep down upon a man's consciousness in a moment of reflective solitariness. If this be called subjectivism, we need to foster it.

Furthermore, the emergent character of our world indicates that there are processes, social and non-social, which are operative to promote value above and beyond the conscious efforts of man. The world is rich in unpredicted goods; and with this religion becomes "the establishment of help-gaining personal adjustment to the elements of a conditioning environment."²⁸ Moral creativeness cannot consist in belief-centered devotion but in God-centered devotion; yet it is not a conformity to a super-

"... the mystic, in reading his own yearnings and feelings into nature, has often made poetry of what should be prose, and has prevented man from gaining that insight into material things on which even his spiritual progress is ultimately dependent. We should, moreover, keep in mind that the peculiar feeling of certainty which attends the mystic vision is not itself a criterion of objective truth. The asylums are full of persons who see visions and hear voices and have intuitions of unutterable truths which can easily be proved to be no truths at all by those in possession of their faculties."

²⁷Wieman, Macintosh, Otto, Is There A God, p. 46. (By Dr. Wieman.)

²⁸S. Mathews, The Growth of the Idea of God (New York: Macmillan Co., 1931), p. 35.

imposed external moral order but it is awareness and sensitivity to the novel responsibilities resident in the moral situation in terms of which the moral act must be interpreted. The validity of this consists in the fact that God is an existential fact, revealed by reason and observation, which sustains and promotes our highest values.

CHAPTER XIII

THE INTEGRAL NATURE OF FACT AND VALUE

The essence of religious humanism resides in a dualism which it sets up between fact and value. With this, we have our problem for this chapter which is to investigate if such a dualism is valid. In order to study this particular characteristic of the anti-theistic mood, it will be necessary to select a typical humanistic epistemology for examination. Justification for our selection of the epistemology of Professor Sellars is claimed on the basis of its affinities with D. Parker's Human Values already studied in this thesis, and also on the ground that the author has done extensive writing on the subject of religion from the humanistic point of view. The plan of procedure will be first to consider analytically the humanistic epistemology and then to show the inadequacies of its implicit nominalism.

The first point of importance to note in Professor Sellars' epistemology is his view of mind. In no sense can it be taken as a symbolic functioning of events. Rather, it is a term for intracortical activity of the organism. "The mind is the brain as known in its functioning. It is the brain in its integrative capacities."¹ By placing consciousness strictly in the organism as "a natural ingredient of functioning cortical systems,"² mind is alleged to be restored to its proper position, namely, in the organism. In examining Sellars' view of the given, Professor Morris interprets it to be personal and subjective in character. Datum is wholly in the individual's perceptual processes. It is an "intro-cortical occurrence."³ Mental activity is brain activity. In reference to this critical realist view of mind, Professor Morris has critically said, "The nervous system is obviously the modern substitute for the Cartesian soul."⁴ He declares that "neither the soul, nor the realm of subsistences, nor the brain, nor the organism has satisfactorily housed the world

¹R. W. Sellars, Evolutionary Naturalism (Chicago: Open Court Publishing Co., 1922), p. 300.

²Ibid., p. 294.

³C. W. Morris, Six Theories of Mind, p. 239.

⁴Ibid., p. 272.

as given."⁵ Thus, a more adequate conception of mind and of nature must be found than that provided by critical realism.⁶

This view of mind implies that objects or the external world are "cognitionally given" but not "existentially given." The idea can never be compared with the object which is not existentially given. In short, it is a systematic denial of any "copy" theory of the physical world. Most confusion in epistemology is traced to the uncritical assumption that man can "intuit" the object when what is to be considered is not merely a subject-object duality but also an interpretation of the second in terms of the subject's perceptual content. Since the object cannot be literally given in the act of knowing, any knowledge of the object which is germane to its objective nature is denied. While complete agnosticism is avoided by the affirmation of an object's existence, literal knowledge of the object in terms of its objective properties is denied because of the intraorganic nature of perceptual processes which constitute mind. It is a technique designed to demolish the old ideal of direct or indirect apprehension of the object in favor of non-apprehensional knowledge wherein "things and processes can be known . . . only on the foundation of perception. A percept and a physical thing are not the same but this latter can be known to the degree it is known in science only because it conditions percepts."⁷ Possibly due to an exaggerated fear of supernaturalism, Mr. Sellars does not pay due regard to the significance of the concept as opposed to the sensory basis of the percept. While he does admit "primary dimensions" of things and processes, as opposed to secondary perceptual qualities, their extreme importance in gaining knowledge is disregarded. Ultimately, the concept and the percept are of like significance when it comes to knowing the object in its objective status. That concepts have a universality is ascribed to their social genesis in being used to describe a common world. The nominalistic principle of mental pluralism by which it is claimed that no two minds can have numerically identical concepts or percepts is said to point to a denial of objects as existentially given.⁸ Both concepts and percepts are brain-made.

In fine, the epistemological dualism in humanistic critical realism is clearly built on the notion that datum and object must

⁵Ibid., p. 273.

⁶For a further discussion, see pp. 168 ff. of this thesis.

⁷R. W. Sellars, Critical Realism (Chicago: Rand, McNally Co., 1916), p. 30.

⁸Ibid., p. 74.

be sharply differentiated. It is affirmed that there is a physical realm co-existent with the content of perception, but we know it only in terms of subjective states of consciousness. "The content with which we automatically clothe acknowledged qualities is subjective."⁹ The raw materials for scientific knowledge are restricted to subjective data. Imaginal sensory content cannot exist in a functional field external to cortical activity.

In the above discussion of Sellars' view, it should be evident that he is primarily interested in opposing the notion that perceptual processes give us copies of the objective world. The refrain in his writings is that the object of perception cannot be intuited. This is a refutation of naive realism and neo-realism wherein a rigid distinction is not made between sensory content and the object. There can be no literal presence in experience nor in awareness of the object known, it is declared. The plea is to be realists and yet to "appreciate subjectivism."¹⁰

Now, there is an alternative aside from holding to the copy theory that "knowledge of objects means qualitative coincidence of the idea and the real"¹¹ on the one hand, and that of setting up a sharp epistemological dualism between content and object on the other. This consists in a recognition of the concept as comprising a relational pattern in which the independent nature of what is apprehended is exhibited in experience. And this is not blindness to the function of human thought in reality as known. Our world of experience is not given in experience except as it is a construct of thought from sense data. Mind and the given meet, and reality as we know it is a reflection of the structure of human intelligence and of the nature of the given sensory content. The criteria of interpretation are of the mind and imposed upon the given by our mental processes.¹² Our immediate awareness of the sensory content is not made properties of objects in this approach. It is rather through the relational patterns inherent in sensory content, transforming it into order instead of chaos, that objects are known. The conceptual interpretation of the given, subjected to the tests of prediction, may be envisaged as the real object. This structure of relations is meaningless except in terms of the empirical consequences correlative to the pursuit of prediction. In short, by recognizing the

⁹R. W. Sellars, Knowledge and Its Categories, p. 197.
(Chap. VI in Essays in Critical Realism, edited by D. Drake).

¹⁰Ibid., p. 190.

¹¹Lewis, op. cit., p. 162.

¹²Ibid., p. 14.

indispensable interpretative function of the concept, for without the concept there can be no knowledge, the meaning of which emerges in the tests of prediction and applicability, there is a way to avert the subjectivism in the epistemological dualism which would have the world as known to be housed in cortical structures and processes. Hence, while there may be a qualitative coincidence of the idea and the real, yet, there is another source for a valid knowledge of the independently real object. This method is illustrated in Professor Lewis's assertion:

"'A is X relative to R' and 'A is Y relative to S' are absolute truths. Moreover, they may be truths about the independent nature of A. Generally speaking, if A had no independent character, it would not be X relative to R or Y relative to S. These relative (or relational) characters, X and Y, are partial but absolutely valid revelations of the nature of A. If we should add, 'There is no truth about A which can be told without reference to its relation to R or S, or some other such,' we should then have a very good paradigm to the relativity of knowledge."¹³

Furthermore, the validity of rationalistic scientific method depends upon the applicability and predictive capacity of relational patterns as they relate to nature. All has not been said when we say that concepts are mind made. The point of major significance in science is that they apply to nature and serve to direct prediction. Science could not exist on the basis of pure nominalism. "Our constructive scientists are not phenomenologists,"¹⁴ says Professor Mead. Technicians must state their findings in terms of things and a world of things. Reality lies not in isolated sense data but in the relational pattern which is the object of scientific investigation. The applicability of a concept resides in the ordered relation of different sense data relative to objective conditions of behavior.¹⁵ Thus applicability involves predictions and probability. Empirical eventualities implicit in the application of a concept must be known before its application can claim validity. Thinghood must include objective change; thus, we have the ineradicable element of unpredicted possibility in the application of concepts. The purpose of the concept is to control the variant irrational items in existence in terms of the invariant discernible uniformities. Correlations and uniformities appropriated by conceptual knowledge come to be "the essence of

¹³Ibid., p. 168.

¹⁴G. H. Mead, The Philosophy of the Present, p. 94.

¹⁵Lewis, op. cit., p. 130.

the thing."¹⁶ Thinghood consists in a relatively stable complex of properties.

Possibly the most characteristic feature of Morris Cohen's Reason and Nature resides in its repudiation of nominalism. Here it is shown that scientific laws which have been subjected to all the instrumentalities for verification afforded by rationalistic scientific method are more than descriptions of the routine of man's perceptual processes. Such laws have an existential ontological validity that much modern positivistic nominalistic thought wholly disregards. Nominalistic empiricism rests upon the fallacious assumption that reality may be identified with that which is psychologically or sensuously vivid.

Rationalistic science seeks "the invariant relations which constitute the nature or character of things in the variation or flux of temporal existence."¹⁷ This quest is a valid one due to the fact that scientific laws or principles are more than a description of the sequence of the scientist's sensory processes. They have genuine ontological validity in that they are germane to reality. Science must ultimately go back to faith in "the rational concatenation of things according to universal law."¹⁸ In spite of change there is the polar fact of constancy in the nature of things. We have a profitable heuristic principle in the query, "What is there in the nature of things which makes the apprehension of rational connections a source of knowledge?"¹⁹

Science has meaning for itself and contributes meaning to religion in that it facilitates human effort in liberating man from "the charnel house of the actual" through a revelation of "the underlying order which governs the wider realm of possibility."²⁰ This is a realism toward which modern thought may legitimately turn in order to find escape from romantic subjectivism concerning the meaning and worth of life. Such an interpretation of the status of knowledge affords a sense of urgency which is lacking in the positivistic dogma that meanings are intracerebral.

A very significant polemic against epistemological dualism is to be found in objective relativism. As typical of this position we may take the declaration of Morris Cohen that

" . . . a plurality of aspects is an essential trait of

¹⁶Ibid., p. 395.

¹⁷M. R. Cohen, Reason and Nature, p. 105.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 282.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 114.

²⁰Ibid., p. 69.

things in existence. Determinate existence thus continues free from self-contradiction because there is a distinction between the domains in which these opposing statements are each separately true."²¹

That is, two statements when assigned to separate aspects of existence may be true, which, when taken abstractly, might be contradictory. When we analyze A into B and C, it is not meant that B and C are constituent isolated parts of A but that a pattern of relations serve to connect A with B and C. In logical analysis, a point has meaning only in relation to other points.²² Conceptual meaning consists in a structure of relations. To define analytically any immediately presented object it must be described in terms of its constant relations to a series of other objects. No object can be apprehended in isolation. Its character is definitely conditioned by that of other objects in whose relationship it stands. The problem as to whether knowledge involves a coincidence of quality in the object and the presentation is not real to the objective relativist since knowledge refers to the relation between one experience and other experiences which are to be anticipated.²³ Knowledge is relational rather than coincidence of object and sensory content. That "the stars are fixed relative to each other" in spite of all planetary movement shows the relational character of knowledge,--in short, that the essential character of things resides in "a plurality of aspects." Here, for the purpose of our thesis, it is especially worthy of note that "the greatest objectivity and community of knowledge is found precisely in those fields where emphasis upon relational structure is the greatest."²⁴

The above reference to the epistemology of objective relativism has been in terms of the abstract thought of pure logicians. When we turn to authors who are interested in the emergent aspect of nature as it appears in the adjustive functions of organic life, we find a new but kindred emphasis upon the practical character of reality. For example, Mr. Dewey says, "Knowledge is reality making a particular and specified sort of change in itself."²⁵ Also, "It is the business of that organic adaptation involved in all knowing to make a certain difference in reality."²⁶ "The world which appears is a world into which action has causally entered."²⁷ The import of these quotations is that no imaginal sensory item in conscious life is wholly subjective. It is a

²¹Ibid., p. 166.

²²Lewis, op. cit., p. 82.

²³Ibid., p. 165.

²⁴Morris, op. cit., p. 318.

²⁵J. Dewey, Does Reality Possess Practical Character,
p. 59. (From Essays in Honor of W. James.)

²⁶Ibid., p. 69.

²⁷Morris, op. cit., p. 317.

genuine part of nature, although dependent in part upon the activity of the organism. Qualities have true existential status entering into the character of things as well as into the subjective state of consciousness. Immediate qualities are qualities of inclusive situations. The object is dependent upon organic action. But "the object as known is not simply a state of the subject since the changes produced in and by the organism are, on this view, actual characters in nature, as 'objective' and 'subjective.'"²⁸ The object as known is an object which has been "existentially produced." It is a reality that has taken place in and through the act of knowing. This is a generative rather than a selective theory of the given. Accordingly, Mr. Dewey says, "Qualities never were in the organism; they always were qualities of interactions in which both extra-organic things and organism partake."²⁹

The function of intelligence is to redirect events into a meaningful domain and with this mind becomes "the symbolic functioning of events." Ideas are not only functional in purpose but also in nature, and it is in the latter fact that mind as a symbolic function achieves validity. For Dewey, mind transcends particular processes of consciousness and thus conditions them. From one angle "thinking is instrumental to the control of the environment." From another, mind is "the functional character of a complex interaction of natural events."³⁰

Thus, we have both instrumental and symbolic functions of mind. As Professor Morris has pointed out in connection with the Dewey-Mead theory of mind as function, ". . . the theory is doubly functional: mind on the one hand, serves the purpose of furthering organic action, while, on the other hand, mind is regarded as the functioning of events that are not intrinsically mental."³¹ In that aspect of pragmatic thought which has been interpreted by Professor Morris in terms of objective relativism we have a firm revolt against both epistemological dualism and ontological dualism. In short, it is a realism without a monism or dualism.³²

Values in terms of objective relativism have a clear-cut human reference, but they are not subjective because they are relative to natural situations. They occur in nature but do not

²⁸Ibid., p. 304.

²⁹Ibid., p. 302.

³⁰Ibid., p. 291.

³¹Ibid., p. 276.

³²See J. Dewey, "Realism without Monism or Dualism," Journal of Philosophy, Vol. XIX (1922).

constitute it. The world of nature conditions them.³³ Values cannot be merely interest, interpreted in terms of an all pervasive characteristic of the motor-affective life of man. In defense of this view, D. Prall has entered into a controversy with Mr. Dewey, only to have it pointed out that value involves judgements which require deliberate choice in the behavior situation in which the emergent value is resident.³⁴ A value is a matter of "an object, event, situation res, possessing the quality."³⁵

While it is irrelevant to our purpose to state at this point a complete value theory in terms of objective relativism, attention must be called to the inadequacy of any humanistic view which would postulate a hiatus between fact and that which possesses worth. (1) It is based upon a nominalistic positivism which is not valid in the light of scientific method. (2) If value resides in a pattern of conscious qualities resident in intra-cortical activity, then there is no basis for a complete explanation of disvalue. (3) If mind, as locus of value, be uncritically interpreted in terms of some epistemology which does not adequately recognize its instrumental and symbolic function, it cannot be hoped that the proposed interpretation of value will be of lasting significance in the light of the advance of modern explanations of the status of mental life. (4) To be oblivious to the conditioning fact of nature in respect to value is a view similar to the notion that morality can be reduced to a reflex effect of conduct upon the self.

³³A. E. Murphy, "Ideas and Nature," University of California Publications, VIII, 193 ff.

Also see Murphy's article on "Objective Relativism in Dewey and Whitehead," The Phil. Review, XXXVI (1927), 121 ff.

³⁴J. Dewey, "Valuation and Experimental Knowledge," Phil. Review, XXXI, 325 f.

³⁵J. Dewey, "Values, Likings, and Thought," Jour. of Philosophy, XX, 617 ff.

CHAPTER XIV

THE ESCAPE FROM ILLUSORY PLAUSIBILITIES

It has been argued that religion is illusory because it is a child of thought wholly determined by wishes.¹ Its future is declared to be that of an illusion because it has nothing in common with "education to reality" which it is the peculiar task of science to perform. Its goals for behavior are said to be fictitious, based upon illusory plausibilities rather than upon an examination of the actual environmental forces in the midst of which we must live. Now, our thesis is that in theism there resides a validity whereby the religious man is obligated to examine the real character of his world in order to have his action truly pertinent. In so far as he has been motivated by fictitious fantastic objectives, he must attempt to reconstruct his "style of life" along lines that are commensurate with "reality," to use a favorite word of the psychotherapist.

One modern school of psychotherapy starts with the basic assumption that personality is a zielgerichtete Einheit.² Accordingly, to understand human nature, it is necessary to comprehend it as an immanent goal-seeking unity. The mind, which is conditioned by the body, is a unity adjusted to a goal. The psychotherapist of the Adlerian school seeks first to learn if a patient's interests are in human beings and in the external world.³ Dr. Adler declares that to lack that interest in the outer world is to be the victim of a psychopathic condition. To hold and cherish beliefs not subject to verification in this observable world is precarious if we value mental health. It is good will for others that has an especial therapeutic value. The style of life must have a social basis of reference for the sake of psychic well

¹S. Freud, The Future of An Illusion (London: Hogarth Press, 1928), chaps. ix and x.

²E. Wexberg, Individualpsychologie (Leipzig: S. Hiezel, 1928), chap. i. See also A. Adler, "Personlichkeit als geschlossene Einheit," Internationale Zeitschrift fur Individual-Psychologie, X, 81 ff.

³A. Adler, "Der Sinn des Lebens," Internationale Zeitschrift fur Individual-Psychologie, IX (1931), 162.

being.⁴ "The path of the neurosis does not lead in the direction of social functioning, nor does it aim at solving given life-problems"⁵ Thus, any religious orientation in terms of such illusory plausibilities as would minimize man's awareness of the nature of the field of stimulation which surrounds him, is positively harmful.⁶ Personality, as "an immanent goal-directed unity," finds health and creativity only in being oriented in terms of the natural facts operative in the moral situation. Theism possesses validity to promote such perspectives in so far as it points out that reality is located in, or in relation to, a present which is conditioned by a past, and that God's nature is physical.

First, any plan designed to avoid illusory plausibilities in religious orientation, demands a critical consideration of the meaning of historical items, especially since Christianity is "the pre-eminently historical religion."⁷ Just what is involved, epistemologically and metaphysically, when "the mind of faith" declares that in the historical personality of Jesus Christ we have an adequate revelation of God? Too often, out of a desire to edify, religious historians have done no more than to arrange historical materials so as to preach the gospel of their own particular sect. That history has a great positive contribution to make in the suggestion of a variety of meaningful alternatives in the solution of problems, no one could deny. Furthermore, it is only by an examination of the past that any given present can account for its own peculiarity and emergent character. But to set up the actuality of a past as a norm for a present is gross brutality when finer hopes and anticipations are possible emergent actualities. We dare not be so preoccupied with a past past that the immediate novel present is prevented from yielding its true meaning to us.

In The Philosophy of the Present Professor Mead has given many valuable suggestions concerning what might be said to consti-

⁴Ibid., p. 171.

⁵A. Adler, The Practice and Theory of Individual Psychology (Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1924), p. 23.

⁶J. Schairer, "Die Individualpsychologie als Wissenschaft von den aktiven Seelenkräften," Internationale Zeitschrift für Individual-Psychologie, X, 102 f.

⁷To use E. W. Lyman's word further, Christian thinkers have always been willing to use "the history of religion as one of the great sources of the ultimate practical truths about the universe." Theology and Human Problems, p. 55.

tute a philosophy of history. Here, we cannot propose to state in full his intricate theory concerning the status of the past in respect to its nature, form, and function. One point of emphasis which is of primary importance for our argument, however, resides in the contention that each present must necessarily write its own past, since it is impossible to inquire in any empirical sense as to what a past may be, independent of its temporal reference. A past is not merely an antecedent present, because in its relation to the present, it displays a causal determination as the result of an essential irrevocability which is not nullified by its emergent novelty.

As known, the past necessarily exists in, or in relation to, a novel present. We can have no basis of reference from which to view the past except that of the emergent present. The past will necessarily vary with the present. New pasts will "arise behind" as the emergent event of the present marks out its antecedent conditions or causes. The past of a new present will be different from that of a former present that lacks the emergent qualities. As a result of the emergent new relatedness, a new perspective of the past must ensue. "The present in which the emergent appears accepts that which is novel as an essential part of the universe, and from that standpoint rewrites its past."⁸ Also, "The statement of the past within which the emergent appeared is inevitably made from the standpoint of a world within which the emergent is itself a conditioning as well as a conditioned factor."⁹ Every present affords a revisable past which never remains the same.¹⁰

It is important to note that there is no contradiction

⁸G. H. Mead, The Philosophy of the Present, p. 11.

⁹Ibid., p. 15.

¹⁰A. V. Harnack, Die Entstehung der christlichen Theologie und des kirchlichen Dogmas, p. 9. Here Harnack points out how eine ruckstandige Ethick soon caused early Christianity to lose its original animated youthful fervor. He says it failed in presenting in all its purity, the message of Jesus concerning the Kingdom of God, eschatology, and ethics because it absorbed an enormous amount of baggage from the series of presents through which it necessarily passed. Harnack's observation is correct but his inference that it might have been otherwise is nonsense. We must admit that no present can have any past as known except one which is a transient construct made in terms of current ideology. It is necessary in any theory of the past which would serve to keep a man's citizenship out of heaven.

between the novelty of the past as generated by an emergent present and its essential irrevocability. The pasts that we are involved in are both revocable and irrevocable. "There is a finality that goes with the passing of every event."¹¹ We know that there is a past independent of any present because there is a vast content which we do not always discover in spite of its causal determination. Even if we do not know what the past event was, yet its irrevocability remains. But this does not imply a metaphysical entity independent of a definite present. We find reality only in such reference systems which function within the realm of existence. Metaphysically viewed, a reference system can exhibit reality only in terms of the actuality of existence. A past is unreal if it is said to fall in a reference system which fails to function with the pivotal fact of the present.¹² The relatedness of the reference system which constitutes the past, is real when it incorporates a present as the pivotal factor. In temporal transition we have "a unique sort of relativity" which may be described as a system that is distinguished by "the temporal center from which its relation to past events is organized."¹³ The past possesses reality in terms of that system. So much for the thesis that reality does not exist in, or in relation to, a past, but on the other hand, that it is exhibited in, or in relation to, the pivotal fact of the present as temporal center.

Now, if reality has its locus in the present, it remains to indicate further what we mean by the present. It is clear that those who find Reality "revealed" in the religious experience of moral optimism rather than in historical items (miracles, for example) as traditional apologists did, we have a present used as the locus of reality. For example, Professor Macintosh sees the religious experience of the present moment as the locus of Reality, or at least the locus for its revelation. Accordingly, it is declared to be "reasonable" to say that Reality would not stimulate a need in man which is not adequately provided for by Reality. It would be "unreasonable" to deny that this Reality is "essentially identical with the Holy Ghost of Christian faith."¹⁴ Let

¹¹G. H. Mead, The Philosophy of the Present, p. 3.

¹²A. Tonness, "A Notation on the Problem of the Past-- With Especial Reference to George Herbert Mead," Journal of Philosophy, XXIX, 605.

¹³G. H. Mead, The Philosophy of the Present, edited by A. Murphy, p. xxi.

¹⁴D. C. Macintosh, The Reasonableness of Christianity, p. 131.

it be noted that in this argument there is no room for a world emergent in its essential nature, at least so far as it might have meaning for a theistic philosophy. Novelty in religious experience does not indicate emergent qualities in Reality according to Professor Macintosh. There is an "essential Christianity" and by this is meant a quantum which has been bequeathed by "historic Christianity";¹⁵ and it exists in spite of, and independent of, any transformation or transmutation which might become actual through the stimulating contact of the pervasive forces in existence. And yet, Professor Macintosh's final stand is that Christian faith is ultimately a matter of an attitude of the will and in no way does it involve "an opinion on any matter of historical investigation."¹⁶ The Christian moral ideal "is valid, apart altogether from the question as to how far it was historically realized or taught by the historic Jesus."¹⁷ But this does not mean that the historicity of Jesus is not a fact for that would be "unreasonable." Professor Macintosh merely prefers to substantiate his argument for Christian faith independent of particular facts of history, because, as he sees the issue, such methodology is a "tactical advantage." He wants to escape "the necessary incertitude of historical opinion"; hence, the array of inferences from the religious experience of moral optimism.¹⁸

According to the above statement it is apparent that the philosophy of moral optimism would find reality either in or in reference to a present. But it lacks a safeguard against pleasing illusions because it is oblivious to the fact that a present cannot be extricated from the conditioning situation out of which it arose, for whatever happens, including the temporal center called a present, happens under determining conditions. "What has taken place issues in what is taking place."¹⁹ The field of stimulation is a composite affair, consisting of conditions for the adjustment of the organism and these have been intruded by a past. We cannot avoid the impact of a past in its causal determination. Before it appears no emergent can be said, by definition, to follow from the past. Yet after it appears, we can find, at least in part, what determined its occurrence. Our knowledge is never complete and hence "no past which we can construct can be as adequate as the situation demands."²⁰ There is no problem which confronts us that does not conceivably demand more knowledge than is at our disposal.

¹⁵Ibid., See chap. ix on "The Historic Jesus."

¹⁶Ibid., p. 138. ¹⁷Ibid., p. 138. ¹⁸Ibid., p. 135.

¹⁹G. H. Mead, The Philosophy of the Present, p. 13.

²⁰Ibid., p. 31.

If we deny the conditioning nature of the past, we forfeit the possibility of a true "historical mindedness." For example, it is only through an understanding of the background of the spirit of discontent with political subjection and economic inequality in the first century of the Christian era that the Messianic Hope with its passion for catastrophe and revolution can be understood. History as a study in genetic processes is meaningless without an awareness of the fact that pasts undergo transformation as they enter human experience, and yet because of their irrevocable as well as revocable nature, do exercise control over the future. Progress in history must be sought elsewhere than in "the miraculous control by God as Augustine taught, or the strict teleology of Herrmann, or the Weltgeist of Hegel."²¹ It must be sought in terms of the needs of collective human behavior as techniques and methods have been found which have set available forces operative to the end of the satisfaction of such needs.

Furthermore, we have no adequate basis for human freedom without a knowledge of that which exhibits a causal determination in the field of existence. "Freedom is an impossibility on the basis of an indeterminism."²² There is a pattern of relatedness which is germane to objective reality. While this pattern does not eliminate the disrupting fact of contingent forces, yet the free man is he who acts cognizantly of it. Human rationality cannot exhaust the total meaning of existence. While determinism is not necessarily freedom, yet it is potentially so if freedom be seen in terms of an awareness of the conditioning forces in our world plus a mystic sensitivity to the possibilities for novel emergent value-qualities resident in those forces. Man cannot be truly free if mind does not exist in nature in the sense that nature may be revealed in relation to the experience of moral action. Mind, in its essential nature which is functional can never transcend the environment within which it operates. Freedom is meaningless without a determinate existential basis of reference whereby man may correct and revise his compensatory rationalizations concerning the nature of God, man, and the world in which we live. We are not free to satisfy all of our subjectivistic needs independent of a conformity to God's objective nature. The satisfaction of worthy desires may be denied fulfillment. It is a pernicious illusion to say that the freedom of the spiritually

²¹S. Mathews, The Spiritual Interpretation of History (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1917), p. 67.

²²H. N. Wieman, From a class lecture in "365. Religious Aspects of the Theory of Knowledge."

minded is such that the forces of nature are impotent to snatch genuine values from it. Loss is real and inevitable. We deny that the possible transmutation of tragedy into value, means that loss is without actuality in existence for those who are spiritually free.

The focal fact of the present as temporal center escapes subjectivity because its pattern of relations transcends any one frame of reference. It is a matter of the object being "contemporaneously in different systems to be what it is in either."²³ In other words, it is the capacity of being several things at once, meaning by this that the novel event is not confined to one reference system. Or to quote Professor Mead further, "the location of the object in one system places it in others as well."²⁴ By this is meant the social character of the universe. And sociality culminates in mind because in it we have the highest manifestation of the capacity to take the role of the other. An object, by entering a system, has its nature determined by the other members of that system; and in passing into a new system, something of the nature of all members of the old, is carried over into the process of adjustment to the new items. There is "an identity of pattern extending through passage." In this relational aspect "lies the rationality of all experience, and the source of symbolism. It is here also that we find the fundamental distinction between objective and subjective phases of experience. The carrying on of relations is objective."²⁵ With the passing of subjectivism in the attainment of "the significant symbol" or concept, with the embodied pattern of relations in terms of reference systems, communication is facilitated, and the construction of illusory fictitious goals for human living on the basis of what is said to be plausible, is averted. Reality in terms of the behavior situation as a point of reference, is a corrective of the pleasing illusions in those speculative surmises that are based upon an ideal order external to the moral act.

By making the behavior situation, in terms of which moral action finds its meaning, the point of reference for the moral ideal, the object of religious devotion comes to acquire significance in terms of reality because it belongs to a relational system that places its focal point in observable existence. The theological corollary of this fact is that God's nature is in observable existence and is physical. We acknowledge no disembodied spirit for "spiritists who localize disembodied spirits in

²³Mead, The Philosophy of the Present, p. 63.

²⁴Ibid., p. 63.

²⁵Ibid., p. 96.

space" are crypto-materialists.²⁶ Here we are especially indebted to Professor Wieman for clarification upon the logical implications at this point. He has shown that God is "a present, potent, operative observable reality."²⁷ As we have already endeavored to show, it is the genius of the concept to go beyond immediate perception by involving much which is not given in sensory content; hence, God, as the distinctive relational pattern in existence, goes beyond existence and enters the realm of possibility. He is the structure of existence and possibility which sustains, promotes, and constitutes highest value.²⁸ In his existential nature, he incorporates the present and actual conditions in the environmental field which are most critically and ultimately important. He is the object "whatever its nature may be, which will yield maximum security and abundance to all human living, when right adjustment is made."²⁹ The operative significance of the physical nature of God is that in religious living, there is no basis for pride in being stupidly oblivious to the field of stimulation in which our life exists. Neither prayer nor worship dares neutralize an awareness and sensitivity to such concrete forces. Such an end would be pernicious subjectivity. There is a determinate aspect to God's functional nature and religious living demands such a correction and regulation of man's subjective needs that he is able to accept and transmute what is loss, or merely neutral in value significance, into a living fact of worth in that inclusive system of good which may be called the kingdom of God. Salvation is not merely a change of the self as a reflex effect of conduct upon it, but rather is it the attainment of a critical devotion whereby the affective and conative life forces achieve an organization in terms of a cooperative effort to promote the order of supreme worthfulness now operative in existence. This necessitates such a critical "education to reality" that freedom is achieved from any motivation that is based upon pleasing illusion or illusory plausibility.

²⁶Cohen, Reason and Nature, p. xiii.

²⁷Wieman, Macintosh, Otto, Is There A God? p. 11.

²⁸H. N. Wieman, God and Value in Religious Realism, edited by D. Macintosh (New York: Macmillan Co., 1931).

²⁹H. N. Wieman, Religious Experience and Scientific Method, p. 381.

CHAPTER XV

A BRIEF SUMMARY OF SOME PRINCIPAL CONCLUSIONS

An attempt will now be made to indicate in outline form, some of those features, which, in any religious system of thought, are necessary in order to avert an unwarranted and often pernicious subjectivism in religious living. It is believed that these summarized statements might be useful in promoting clarity in the meaning that may be ascribed to the ambiguous term "subjectivism."

(1) Man must be regarded as continuous with nature. Mental elements are not disembodied psychic stuff. Like any imaginal content, mind exists in a field of interaction between cortical structures and the properties of objective reality. It is an emergent fact whose symbolic function belongs to objective things in relation to individuals. There is no dualism between the psychical and the physical.

Thus, mind is not a purely psychic stuff but rather a field of meaningful relations embodied in organic life as it functions symbolically on the human level.¹ "The brain is not haunted,"² and by this we would indicate that mind is not housed in cortical structures. Nor is there any dualism between it and the physical, in spite of the fact that the object of knowledge is both mediate and immediate. There is a causally determining relation between these two aspects, so that we have a realism which is not the traditional monism or dualism.³ Outworn psychological theories in respect to psychic states and ideas are averted for these are sources of much objectionable subjectivism in religion.

The human mind is not a static innate entity or faculty that exists independent of the transmutation process caused by sociological influences. It has a social genesis in nature.

¹C. W. Morris, Six Theories of Mind, chap. vi. See also this thesis, pp. 70, 150, and 172. (Page 70 is to be found only in the complete dissertation on file in the University of Chicago Libraries.)

²Quoted from Mead by Professor Morris in class lectures.

³J. Dewey, "Realism without Monism or Dualism," Journal of Philosophy, XIX, 309 ff. and 358 ff.

(2) A corollary of the above view of man is that salvation dare not be interpreted as a transformation made within the soul-substance independent of the world in which we live. Man's soul cannot be theized as if it existed in a vacuum independent of conditioning forces in a causally determining environment. The meaning of conduct goes beyond that of being merely a reflex effect upon the self. There is no other-worldly salvation of the personal soul, with no reference to the natural and social objects that modify goods actually experienced in the phenomenal world. We deny such subjectivism which denies that the human mind determines and is determined by its environment.

Man is saved by the attainment of a critical devotion to God wherein his affections and conative life forces achieve an organization in reference to the field of stimulation which is charged with forces elicited by a mutual interaction between the organism and the environment.⁴ To repeat, moral creativity is more than the reflex effect of conduct upon the self.

(3) Intuition, independent of sense data and reason, is not a source of new knowledge. Prophetic insights are emergent and novel because of causally conditioning factors. But we do not deny private states of consciousness and individuality as they may enter into the promotion of innovating religious insights. Thought always involves an imaginal content which depends for its existence upon conditions in the organism as they determine and are determined by the environment.

The knowledge we have resides in verified prediction and this we get through the pursuit of the composite ideal of science.⁵ What is less certain than knowledge is not adequate to serve as a basis for a theistic metaphysics.

It must be denied that the sensory content that is elicited in perceptual processes is germane to the object of knowledge.⁶ We do not intuit directly a supersensible world. Also, no harmony is claimed with the copy theory of knowledge. It is to be denied that we have any "overlapping" of God in the imaginal content of the psychic state of man during what is supposed to be religious

⁴For an appreciative view of "inwardness" in religion see in this thesis pp. 147 ff. Chapters vi and vii (of the complete dissertation) have a special bearing on the problem of human nature.

⁵See chapter ix (of the complete dissertation); also see pp. 149 ff. for categorizing function of the concept in religious living.

⁶See chapter xiii; also proposition 4 on page 32 (of the complete dissertation).

experience.

Neither scientific certainty nor religious security can be established by intuitive insight but rather by the operation of intelligence in the control of contingent forces. Religious security is value only when rooted in an integrated relation between man's verified beliefs about the world in which he lives and his beliefs about the positive values which should guide his behavior. Security so defined is not based upon psychological needs alone. It has been objectified by criticized, communized outlooks.⁷

(4) By denying the copy view of knowledge, one of the chief features of the theory that certain aspects of nature can be studied by an examination of the psychic life of man, is repudiated.⁸ Thus, the nature of God cannot be sketched on the basis of certain qualities in human consciousness as introspectively noted during what is alleged to be religious experience. It is cryptic egotism to assume that God's objective determinate nature can be found by an analysis of the indeterminate ambiguity called religious experience, rather than by an examination of that activity in the total human and non-human environment which constitutes the supreme object of religious experience. Religious experience is a composite term which "swallows up" its own negative, taking in hallucination, illusion, high-suggestibility, wishful-thinking, and belief-centered devotion rather than God-centered devotion, as well as any additional qualities of positive value that we might mention.

(5) Any epistemological dualism which sharply differentiates between the datum in consciousness and the object as known is apt to lead to a positivistic nominalism which is a genuine corollary of subjectivism. Such an epistemology is invalid for either a philosophy of science or a philosophy of theism. The applicability and predictive capacity of a verified concept indicates that it is more than representative of a sequence of psychic states in man. It is germane to reality although it may not plumb existence. A knowledge of the independently real object is defensible on the basis of an objective relativism in which all the inadequacy of a copy theory of knowledge is logically averted. We do not agree with the nominalistic empiricism which would identify reality with the sensuously vivid. We deny epistemological dualism on the basis of knowledge as a relational structure;

⁷See page 86, proposition 3 (of the complete dissertation); also page 117, proposition 4 (of the complete dissertation).

⁸See chapter vii (of the complete dissertation); also chapter xiii.

and it is precisely in this sense that knowledge finds its greatest objectivity and shareability. With reference to this issue, Professor Morris has said, "It is noteworthy that the greatest objectivity and community of knowledge is found precisely in those fields where emphasis upon relational structure is the greatest."⁹ (Underscoring is mine)

The copy theory of knowledge inherent in certain types of epistemological monism or critical monism is also denied because it is based on an outworn psychological theory of ideas and psychic states. We do not deny that the object of knowledge is mediate in one sense and immediate in another but in order to avoid a dualism, a realism is accepted which is neither monism nor dualism.¹⁰ This is an objective relativism in which "the given is regarded as a genuine part of nature even though dependent in part upon the activity of the organism."¹¹

(6) While value has a definitely human reference, yet it cannot be reduced to a state of consciousness independent of the conditioning forces which sustain and promote it. Value and fact are integrally related factors.¹² The world of nature conditions value. There can be no hiatus between the two. In denying that a value is strictly qualitative, we see that it is subject to some such quantitative standards as we have in intensity, preference, and inclusiveness. Value items can be arranged in a series so as to determine their relative importance. Subjectivism is averted in the fact of quantitative standards in value theory.

It is believed that objective relativism is the most adequate epistemology for value theory.¹³ In accordance with this outlook, nominalistic positivism is refuted, with the result that value and those forces which support and promote it are integrally related. Furthermore, it is consonant with the most widely accepted psychological theories concerning human nature and this fills it with additional promise. As to the meaning of the moral ideal of moral creativity, this is to be found in terms of a pattern of relations which emerge from the matrix of the moral act. As a relational structure, it is germane to the source of

⁹Morris, op. cit., p. 318.

¹⁰J. Dewey, "Realism without Monism or Dualism," J. of Phil., XIX, 309 ff., 358 ff. Also all of Part III in this thesis.

¹¹Morris, op. cit., p. 274.

¹²See chapter xiii; also chapters vii, ix, and x of the complete dissertation.

¹³See pp. 162 ff.

all value, serving as a basis for a genuinely valid "objectivity and community of knowledge."

(7) God exists in an observable realm of reality in nature.¹⁴ He is more than disembodied spirit. As an existential fact he cannot be adequately appreciated by the pure spiritist who would make him ineffable, indeterminate, and other-worldly. Man's subjective needs must be corrected and regulated by the stern fact of his physical nature. It is only in terms of such a basis of reference that man is able to correct his compensatory eschatological rationalizations concerning the nature of God. Since God is an observable potent fact in nature, we have a genuine reason to be alert to the impact of the field of stimulation, which through investigation, would direct man into truly pertinent behavior and also into a saving relation with God.

Furthermore, a philosophy of history is essential whereby we may be able to estimate the religious meaning of facts bequeathed to us by the past. One real source of illusion in religion is often due to an erroneous philosophy of the past. As Professor Mead in The Philosophy of the Present has pointed out, that due to the emergent character of our world, each present creates its own past in the sense that, since each present is a novel emergent, by taking it as point of reference to interpret the past, we have a new reference system in which reality resides. We know the past only as revised, and our revision necessarily conditions it as known. Our perceptual as well as our conceptual processes give us no copy of the past past. Our past is a revision of the actual former event. Reality exists in a present as temporal focus of a reference system. Due to the passage of time, no past has been confined to any one reference system.¹⁵

Thus, it may be said that we can worship Jesus best if we admit that the only Jesus we can have is one who exists in a reference system with our present as temporal focus and point of reference. We grant that there is a finality that goes with the passing event. Hence, Jesus is irrevocable as well as revocable. "Jesus Through The Centuries" has been the revocable one, because his reality for each present has resided in the reference system made actual by the focal point of that present.

It is objectionable to tie up our idea of God with some item of the irrevocable past, which necessarily eludes us, precisely because it tends to minimize rather than to magnify the

¹⁴See chap. x (of the complete dissertation); also page 172.

¹⁵See pp. 167 ff.

importance of an alert, fearless, exploratory attitude towards the field of stimulation in which the power of God is operative. No past past can be intuited directly without the unavoidable revision that ensues from the conditioning present which is temporal focus for any view of a past event. Knowledge in terms of relational structure is stressed because such is the basis of a genuine objectivity in religious thinking. We deny that religious experience has meaning until it has been categorized by conceptual processes into a pattern of relations.

(8) The loss of actual value is a real possibility.¹⁶ The emergent field of environmental stimulation is highly charged with the polar fact of friendly and hostile cosmic forces. To deny the latter is to take a cowardly refuge in the domain of introspective plausibilities. "Confidence in the cosmos" is not a spiritual ideal but rather inexcusable stupidity if it so hypnotizes us as to destroy an awareness of the ineradicable disrupting contingent forces in existence. God does not conserve the highest values of the religious man "in spite of anything the forces of nature can do." Positive values are always subject to the risk of loss. The validity of theism does not reside in the apologetic denial that there is loss in the world, but in the faith that it may be transmuted into value, for God transmutes tragedy into a triumphant fact within his own being.

¹⁶See pp. 146, 155; also pp. 87, 102, 118, 138 (of the complete dissertation).

